

U R L Chron

C O N F I D E N T I A L

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20 December 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
Executive Director
Deputy Director for Administration
Deputy Director for Intelligence
Deputy Director for Operations
Deputy Director for Science and Technology

FROM: Director, Office of Legislative Liaison

SUBJECT: HPSCI Staff Session; Subsequent DCI Observations

1. Yesterday, HPSCI staffers Tom Latimer, Mike O'Neil, Steve Berry and Duane Andrews came out for lunch and a follow-on session with [redacted] Danny Childs, [redacted] and me. We had initiated the session to seek ways to improve relations. I was quite satisfied with the way things went. Mike spoke of there being now a "window of opportunity" and Tom noted Congressman Hamilton's strong concern about the image of the Agency in the House and his desire to improve things. With regard to the planned briefing of Hamilton as new Chairman, HPSCI, [redacted]

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2. After noting that our most important continuing interest with the Congress is the budget, and that Congress has provided considerable support for rebuilding the Agency, we agreed that most of today's controversy could be traced to the [redacted] policy differences between Congress and the Executive being so great as to strain to the breaking point the oversight function.

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3. I stated that I shared a problem with them in having an office with little or no institutional memory; my most experienced liaison officer had one year on the job and the office has reorganized several times. Thus, we tend to reinvent the wheel or, more significantly, be ignorant of past agreements. The HPSCI staffers, with their six years of continuity, are aware of the past and have viewed some of our responses as disingenuous, duplicitous, or at best dumb. (Currently, HAC is out of joint because we have not tended to

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include them as an oversight committee, ignoring an emotional exchange on the subject in 1981.)

4. I said that the gut issue, affecting everything now, is distrust on both sides: we distrust the Committees because of a recent propensity to go to the media after classified hearings or before obtaining facts behind sensational headlines. They say they distrust us because of the way in which we respond: stonewalling, partially responding, not responding, or, they feel, misleading.

5. The DCI, after hearing a quick summary of the session, made the following observations: (a) we want to furnish them the information they need (his words and his emphasis); (b) some of the problem stems from the lack of Member availability and of time to best lay everything out; (c) McFarlane and the NSC must be reminded of the HAC and SAC roles and of the fact of there being four Oversight Committees; (d) the Deputies need to be reminded too.

6. Hence this.


Charles A. Briggs

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